



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

New Bovine TB testing requirements for animal movements



www.bovinetb.ie



There are new European Union Regulations regarding Bovine TB, which require that all animals moving farm to farm or through marts must be tested within a certain time frame.

The Bovine TB Stakeholders Forum has agreed to introduce these requirements on a phased basis.

Initially, the requirements are that:

- Cows of all ages, and males over the age of 36 months that are moving farm to farm or through a mart must be TB tested in the last six months **and**
- They must also be moving from a herd that has been tested in the last six months.
- If they do not fulfil both these requirements, they must then be tested, either within the 30 days prior to movement or within 30 days after movement into the new herd.

Animals that require a test in the 30 days after movement will be restricted immediately to the herd into which they have moved. This herd has 30 days to carry out a test on these animals.

If after 30 days, the animals have not been tested, the herd that received them will be restricted. Sale of calves under six weeks of age and the purchase in of animals will be permitted.

If after another 60 days, the animals have still not been tested, the whole herd will be scheduled for a TB test.

If the moved in animal at any point is slaughtered, the restriction will be lifted, except where the herd has been listed for a full test.

This allows the opportunity for cull cows to be purchased, fed and slaughtered without incurring the cost of testing.



So how will it work?

Every time a farmer moves an animal from farm to farm or through a mart, the Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine's computer systems will check to see if the animal is a cow of any age or a male aged over 36 months. If it is, the Department will then check when the animal was last tested and when the herd that is moving the animal out was last tested. If the animal that is moving has not been tested during the last 30 days or either the animal or the herd from which it is moving has not been tested in the last 6 months, the Department will restrict the animal to the herd that received it.

Farmers receiving one of these animals will get a text message from the Department, informing them that the animal has been restricted to their herd. (If their mobile number is not registered with the Department, they will receive a paper notification.) This means the animal cannot move from their herd other than directly to slaughter.

- Farmers will be required to have these animals tested within 30 days. Once the animal tests clear or is slaughtered from the herd, the restriction on the animal will be automatically lifted. Once the restriction has been lifted, the farmer will receive a notification via text or letter.
- If after 30 days, the animal is still alive and has not been tested, the herd will then be automatically restricted and no cattle will be allowed to move off the farm except directly to slaughter.
- Sales of calves under 6 weeks of age will be permitted but they will not be eligible for export. The purchase in of animals will also be facilitated. Farmers will receive a text message and a letter to this effect from the Department.
- If a farmer tests or slaughters the animal within the next 60 days the restriction on the herd will be lifted automatically, provided the animal tests clear. Once the restriction has been lifted, a text and a letter to this effect will be sent to the farmer.
- If after 90 days of movement into the herd, the animal is still alive and has not been tested, the herd will then be scheduled for a full herd test. Sales of calves under six weeks of age and purchase in will continue to be facilitated up until the day before the test is due.
- Farmers will receive a letter notifying them about this test. Once this test has been completed and is clear, the restriction on the herd will be lifted and farmers will receive a letter to this effect. This test date will become the anniversary date for the next annual herd test.

The above requirements do not apply to controlled finishing units (previously termed feedlots) who are continuously restricted under the Bovine TB Eradication Programme.

Timing of the annual herd test?

Farmers either selling or buying animals can time their annual herd test to coincide with the sale or purchase of animals. If farmers wish to re-schedule their annual herd test to an earlier date to facilitate the sale, or purchase, of animals, they must contact their Regional Veterinary Office. If farmers wish to postpone their annual herd test to a later date to coincide with the sale or purchase of animals, they must contact their Regional Veterinary Office before the due date of the test.

- Farmers may be allowed to postpone their annual herd test for up to a maximum of 3 months.
- Herds that apply to postpone their tests will be restricted from the original due date until the test is completed.
- Farmers will be given a permit to purchase animals in during this time, but they may not move animals out of their herd other than direct to slaughter.
- Farmers will be allowed to move out calves that are less than six weeks of age, but these calves are not eligible for export while the herd is restricted.
- Farmers may also test animals that require a post movement test, as part of Department paid tests where one is scheduled for completion, e.g., contiguous tests or post de-restriction check tests.

Will buyers know if animals need a post movement test?

All mart boards currently display the earliest date of test for the batches of animals being presented for sale and compliance certificates display the latest date of test, for each animal. If in doubt, ask the seller the test status of animals.

Further information on Bovine TB is available from your Regional Veterinary Office, Farming Organisation or on www.bovinetb.ie